

ALL'S Well, that Ends Well.

Actus primus. Scena Prima.

Enter yong Bertram Count of Rossillion, his Mother, and Helena, Lord Lafew, all in blacke.

Hel. N deliuering my sonne from me, I burie a second husband.

Ref. And I in going Madam, weep ore my fathers death anew; but I must attend his maiesties command, to whom I am now in Ward, euer more in subiection.

Laf. You shall find of the King a husband Madame, you sir a father. He that so generally is at all times good, must of necessitie hold his vertue to you, whose worthinesse would stirre it vp where it wanted rather then lack it where there is such abundance.

Mo. What hope is there of his Maiesties amendment?

Laf. He hath abandon'd his Plaisitions Madam, vnder whose practises he hath persecuted time with hope, and finds no other aduantage in the proceffe, but onely the loosing of hope by time.

Mo. This yong Gentlewoman had a father, O that had, how sad a passage tis, whose skill was almost as great as his honestie, had it stretch'd so far, would haue made nature immortall, and death should haue play for lacke of worke. Would for the Kings sake hee were liuing, I thinke it would be the death of the Kings discafe.

Laf. How call'd you the man you speake of Madam?

Mo. He was famous fir in his profession, and it was his great right to be so: Gerard de Narbon.

Laf. He was excellent indeed Madam, the King very lately spoke of him admiringly, and mourningly: hee was skilfull enough to haue liu'd still, if knowledge could be set vp against mortallitie.

Ref. What is it (my good Lord) the King languishes of?

Laf. A Fistula my Lord.

Ref. I heard not of it before.

Laf. I would it were not notorious. Was this Gentlewoman the Daughter of Gerard de Narbon?

Mo. His sole childe my Lord, and bequeathed to my ouer looking. I haue those hopes of her good, that her education promises her dispositions shee inherits, which makes faire gifts fairer: for where an vnleane mind carries vertuous qualities, there commendations go with pittie, they are vertues and traitors too: in her they are the better for their simplicitie; she deriues her honestie,

and atcheues her goodnesse.

Lafew. Your commendations Madam get from her teares.

Mo. 'Tis the best brine a Maiden can season her praise in. The remembrance of her father neuer approaches her heart, but the tyranny of her sorrowes takes all liuelihood from her cheek. No more of this Helena, go too, no more least it be rather thought you affect a sorrow, then to haue

Hel. I doe affect a sorrow indeed, but I haue it too.

Laf. Moderate lamentation is the right of the dead, excessive greefe the enemy to the liuing.

Mo. If the liuing be enemy to the greefe, the excessive makes it soone mortall.

Ref. Maddam I desire your holie wishes.

Laf. How vnderstand we that?

Mo. Be thou blest Bertram, and succeed thy father in manners as in shape: thy blood and vertue Contend for Empire in thee, and thy goodnesse Share with thy birth-right. Loue all, trust a few, Doe wrong to none: be able for thine enemy Rather in power then vse: and keepe thy friend Vnder thy owne lifes key. Be cheekt for silence, But neuer tax'd for speech. What heauen more will, That thee may furnish, and my prayers plucke downe, Fall on thy head, Farwell my Lord,

'Tis an vnseason'd Courtier, good my Lord Advise him.

Laf. He cannot want the best That shall attend his loue.

Mo. Heauen blesse him: Farwell Bertram.

Ref. The best wishes that can be forg'd in your thoughts be seruants to you: be comfortable to my mother, your Mistris, and make much of her.

Laf. Farewell prettie Lady, you must hold the credit of your father.

Hel. O were that all, I thinke not on my father, And these great teares grace his remembrance more Then those I shed for him. What was he like?

I haue forgot him. My imagination Carries no fauour in't but Bertrams.

I am vndone, there is no liuing, none, If Bertram be away. 'Twere all one,

That I should loue a bright particuler starre, And think to wed it, he is so aboue me In his bright radiance and colateral light,

Must I be comforted, not in his sphere; Th'ambition in my loue thus plagues it selfe: The hind that would be mated by the Lion Must die for loue. 'Twas prettie, though a plague To see him enerie houre to sit and draw His arched browes, his hawking eye, his euerle In our heares table: heart too capeable Of euerie line and trick of his sweet fauour. But now he's gone, and my idolatrous fancie Must sanctifie his Reliques. Who comes heere?

Enter Parrolles.

One that goes with him: I loue him for his sake, And yet I know him a notorious Liar, Thinke him a great way foole, folie a coward, Yet these six euils sit so fit in him, That they take place, when Vertues steely bones Lookes bleake i'th cold wind: withall, full oft we see Cold wisdom waighting on superfluous folie.

Par. Saue you faire Queene.

Hel. And you Monarch.

Par. No.

Hel. And no.

Par. Are you meditating on virginitie?

Hel. Is you haue some staine of fouldier in you: Let mee aske you a question. Man is enemy to virginitie, how may we barracado it against him?

Par. Keepe him out.

Hel. But he assailes, and our virginitie though valiant, in the defence yet is weak: vnfold to vs some warlike resistance.

Par. There is none: Man setting downe before you, will vndermine you, and blow you vp.

Hel. Blesse our poore Virginie from vnderminers and blowers vp. Is there no Military policy how Virgins might blow vp men?

Par. Virginie beeing blowne downe, Man will quicklier be blowne vp: marry in blowing him downe againe, with the breach your selues made, you lose your City. It is not politicke, in the Common-wealth of Nature, to preserue virginie. Losse of Virginie, is rationall encrease, and there was neuer Virgin goe, till virginie was first lost. That you were made of, is mettall to make Virgins. Virginie, by being once lost, may be ten times found: by being euer kept, it is euer lost: tis too cold a companion: Away with't.

Hel. I will stand for't a little, though therefore I die a Virgin.

Par. There's little can bee saide in't, 'tis against the rule of Nature. To speake on the part of virginie, is to accuse your Mothers; which is most infallible disobedience. He that hangs himselfe is a Virgin: Virginie murders it selfe, and should be buried in highwayes out of all sanctified limit, as a desperate Offendresse against Nature. Virginie breeds mites, much like a Cheese, consumes it selfe to the very payring, and so dies with feeding his owne stomacke. Besides, Virginie is peeuish, proud, ydle, made of selfe-loue, which is the most inhibited sinne in the Cannon. Keepe it not, you cannot choose but loose by't. Out with't: within ten yeare it will make it selfe two, which is a goodly increase, and the principall it selfe not much the worse. Away with't.

Hel. How might one do fir, to loose it to her owne liking?

Par. Let mee see. Marry ill, to like him that ne're it likes. 'Tis a commodity will lose the glosse with lying: The longer kept, the lesse worth: Off with't while 'tis vendible. Answer the time of request, Virginie like an olde Courtier, weares her cap out of fashion, richly fured, but vnfutureable, iust like the brooch & the toothpick, which were not now: your Date is better in your Pye and your Porridge, then in your cheek: and your virginie, your old virginie, is like one of our French wither'd peares, it lookes ill, it eates drily, marry 'tis a wither'd peare: it was formerly better, marry yet 'tis a wither'd peare: Will you any thing with it?

Hel. Not my virginie yet.

There shall your Master haue a thousand loues, A Mother, and a Mistresse, and a friend, A Phenix, Captaine, and an enemy, A guide, a Goddesse, and a Soueraigne, A Counsellor, a Traitorese, and a Deare: His humble ambition, proud humilitie: His iarring, concord: and his discord, dulcets His faith, his sweet disafer: with a world Of pretty fond adoptious christendomes That blinking Cupid gossips. Now shall hee know not what he shall, God fend him well, The Courts a learning place, and he is one.

Par. What one faith?

Hel. That I wish well, 'tis pittie.

Par. What's pittie?

Hel. That wishing well had not a body in't, Which might be felt, that we the poorer borne, Whose baser starres do shut vs vp in wishes, Might vwith effects of them follow our friends, And shew what vwe alone must thinke, which neuer Returnes vs thanks.

Enter Page.

Page. Monsieur Parrolles, My Lord calls for you.

Par. Little Helles farewell, if I can remember thee, I will thinke of thee at Court.

Hel. Monsieur Parrolles, you were borne vnder a charitable starre.

Par. Vnder Mars I.

Hel. I especially thinke, vnder Mars.

Par. Why vnder Mars?

Hel. The warres hath so kept you vnder, that you must needs be borne vnder Mars.

Par. When he was predominant.

Hel. When he was retrograde I thinke rather.

Par. Why thinke you so?

Hel. You go so much backward when you fight.

Par. That's for aduantage.

Hel. So is running away, When feare proposes the safetie:

But the composition that your valour and feare makes in you, is a vertue of a good wing, and I like the weare well.

Par. I am so full of busineses, I cannot answere thee acutely: I will returne perfect Courtier, in the which my instruction shall serue to naturalize thee, so thou wilt be capeable of a Courtiers counsell, and vnderstand what aduice shall thrust vpon thee, else thou diest in thine vnthankfulnes, and thine ignorance makes thee away, farewell: When thou hast leysure, say thy prayers: when thou hast none, remember thy Friends:

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